LOS ANGELES STANDS UP TO ICE

IT MUST BE CLEAR TO EVEN THE MOST MILQUETOAST CENTRIST THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFLICT WILL DETERMINE THE PROSPECTS FOR EVERY OTHER TARGET TRUMP HAS LINED UP IN HIS SIGHTS.

A FIRSTHAND REPORT ON THE CLASHES OF JUNE 6

them off, throwing fireworks and rocks, bottles, and, somehow, ceramic plates. The FBI threw a few flash-bang grenades and tear gas canisters in response, but the spirits of those standing up to them remained high.

People began to smash the windows on the feds' cars. At that point, ICE decided to leave, and a celebration began in the street. More fireworks were set off in a jubilant atmosphere. People partied momentarily before drifting home, heartened by a small victory after a horrifying and dehumanizing day in the so-called United States.

The feds were scrambling, throwing everything they could back at the crowd. People were tear-gassed several times, but were neutralizing the effect by putting ice and water on the canisters as well as traffic cones like they did in Chile. Some people were also throwing the canisters back to the Department of Homeland Security agents that were responsible for them. The crowd was extremely lively and brave. Some right-wing internet streamers tried to get into the area, but they were spotted and promptly dealt with.

DHS couldn't control the situation. The feds were overwhelmed and begged the Los Angeles Police Department to come save them. Despite LA mayor Karen Bass saying she was "appalled" about the presence of ICE in Los Angeles, the LAPD still showed up in large numbers. A low-flying helicopter was telling people that they would be arrested and issuing dispersal orders as LAPD pushed people away from the building over the next four to five hours. Everyone left covered in pepper ball dust and tear gas.

Third Action, 10 pm

A message circulated to the effect that ICE was spotted staging for a raid in Chinatown. (Later, it turned out that they were planning to hold that parking lot for a press conference for Thomas Homan, Trump's "Border Czar," at 7 am the following morning—a press conference that was apparently cancelled.)

Hundreds of people started trickling in, strobing flashlights in the eyes of the federal agents and yelling chants and insults at the riot line.

Even though people had been at actions all day, the energy was high, attracting passersby and random Dodgers fans to join in. The crowd took the street and blocked the entrances once again as things started getting rowdy. This time, LAPD wasn't present, so the federal agents prepared to try to push the people out themselves.

Participants in the crowd tagged the armored ICE vehicle and begin jumping up and down on it while an LRAD was blaring. Someone tagged "FUCK ICE" and spray painted the cameras on a Waymo self-driving car. No organizations were present except a strong contingent from the Los Angeles Tenants Union, who were present for every action in the course of the day.

The federal agents decided that the parking lot was too difficult to hold and began to retreat. The crowd seized the opportunity to block

On June 3, a crowd drove federal agents out of Minneapolis following a raid on a taqueria. On June 4, people confronted US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents as they carried out raids in Chicago and Grand Rapids. On Friday, June 6, people in Los Angeles responded to an ICE raid, precipitating a full day of clashes that continue today. In the following firsthand report, participants describe how people came together to do their best to prevent federal agents from kidnapping people from their community.

Donald Trump's "border czar," Tom Homan, has announced that he will send the National Guard into Los Angeles in response. If the situation escalates elsewhere around the country, as well, it is thinkable that we could see a movement that picks up where the George Floyd uprising left off. Arguably, in sweeping up the president of the California chapter of the Service Employees International Union in their attacks on people in Los Angeles, ICE and the various federal agencies that are being reassigned to support them risk making more enemies just as this confrontation is getting underway.

Although the Trump administration has begun by attacking immigrants—both documented and undocumented—this is only the first step in their effort to establish an autocracy. They are targeting immigrants because they believe them to be the most vulnerable target, but their overarching goal is to accustom all of us to passivity in the face of brutal state violence, breaking the basic bonds of solidarity that ought to connect all human beings.

It must be clear to everyone—even the most milquetoast centrists—that the outcome of the conflict that is ramping up now will determine the prospects for every other target Trump has lined up in his sights, from Harvard University to those who simply wish to be able to afford groceries.

Incidentally, if it is possible that you will be in an environment in which chemical weapons are deployed[1], it is possible to extinguish tear gas canisters—read this short guide[2]. You can find a wealth of similar information about how to stay safe in demonstrations here[3]. To learn about other things you can do to stop ICE, start here[4].

First Action, High Noon

On social media, the news spread that ICE was raiding several spots in downtown Los Angeles, Highland Park, and MacArthur Park. Agents had begun to raid a building in the flower district when a spontaneous mob trapped them inside. People blocked every side of the building, every single entrance, so the agents couldn't get out. They had detained a lot of people in the building already and hadn't expected a swarm of 50-100 Angelenos to trap them.

Apparently, they expected to be able to conduct a visible raid in downtown Los Angeles without a response from the neighborhood. They were wrong. Of the six or more locations that they raided, that one was in the area with the densest population, just blocks from skid row and a few steps from the Piñata district.

A large number of people were at the front entrance blocking ICE from leaving the building. Caught off guard by the crowd, the ICE agents were visibly trying to figure out how to evacuate. Family members of the detained were crying at the doors and the gates, wondering what was going to happen to their loved ones.

The federal government had declared war on Los Angeles.

ICE ordered in an armored truck with three dozen federal riot police and a fleet of vans in tow. The entrance they wanted to come into was the one being blocked by an SEIU sound truck and they began threatening to tow it. SEIU complied and moved their truck, even going so far as to use their sound system to yell "Get on the sidewalk!" at the crowd. Half of the people listened to them and half didn't, but it was a small enough

1 https://crimethinc.com/2021/01/04/a-demonstrators-guide-to-understanding-riot-munitions-and-how-to-defend-against-them

2 https://bsky.app/profile/crimethinc.com/post/3lhcglmxuq22j

3 https://crimethinc.com/2020/10/27/everybody-out-resources-for-a-season-of-post-election-unrest#resources

4 https://crimethinc.com/2025/02/11/eight-things-you-can-do-to-stop-ice

crowd that that made a significant difference. As a consequence, the armored truck and the vans were able to make it up to the gate.

Federal agents in riot gear began trying to push everyone out. The small group who had refused to leave continued to stand their ground, twisting their little riot shields and mocking them. The agents were visibly rattled by the resilience of this group that had somehow assembled within fifteen minutes. In a desperate push, the FBI agents began to throw tear gas canisters into the crowd. Everyone was screaming at the fascist mercenaries as they tried to push back the line. Amid the confusion, the agents managed to clear a path for the vans to enter through the gate.

The feds put the detained workers into the van and began to drive out. The crowd tried to stop them but the FBI escalated—snatching protesters and shooting pepper balls and rubber bullets at everyone. One of the vans sped up and struck the president of the California branch of the Service Employees International Union, injuring him. He was then arrested.

The crowd got more rowdy, lighting fireworks and throwing debris, water bottles, and cabbage at the mercenaries. The FBI responded with a barrage of flash-bang grenades and rubber bullets and more pepper balls.

While that fight continued, someone followed the ICE vans to the Burbank airport, where agents had reportedly claimed that they were bringing a "hockey team." People have been attempting to track the flight and see where it went since.

The other detainees were taken to the MDC (Metro Detention Center) which triggered an action to be called for a couple hours later.

MDC is where hundreds of detainees from the raids are still currently being held. It was also the site of the 2017 abolish ICE encampment which lasted for 60 days.

Second Action, 4 pm

People started amassing at the Metropolitan Detention Center. A press conference took place involving Union Del Barrio, the SEIU, and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles. Peace policing caused fights between the paid activists and the crowd. The activists ended up leaving and the crowd stayed—tagging everything, smashing windows, breaking things, and being ungovernable. Someone had brought a sledgehammer and was breaking the concrete pillars so that people could use the pieces as projectiles to throw at the police. Someone used a swivel chair as a barricade; another person showed up in a dinosaur suit.